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COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

STATE CORPORATION COMMISSION

AT RICHMOND, JUNE 10, 1998

APPLICATION OF

COLUMBIA GAS OF VIRGINIA, INC.

CASE NO. PUE980287

For a general rate increase

ORDER SUSPENDING RATES AND SETTING HEARING

On May 15, 1998, Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. ("Columbia" or "Company") applied for a general increase in rates for services. According to the Application of Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. to Revise its Tariffs (hereinafter "Application") at 2-3, the proposed revised rates and charges would produce \$13,801,444 in additional annual operating revenues over annual revenues produced by Columbia's rates approved by the Commission. The proposed revised rates and charges would produce \$5,262,273 in additional annual revenues over rates and charges which took effect under bond on October 18, 1997, and are subject to refund with interest in State Corporation Commission Case No. PUE970455, Application of Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc., (formerly Commonwealth Gas Services, Inc.). (Id. at 1, 3.) In addition to revising rates for service offered under its various Rate Schedules, the Company proposed to revise its Special Service Charges, other than its Return Check Charge and its On Premise Collection Charge. (Prepared

Direct Testimony of R. E. Horner on Behalf of Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. at 2-3.)

The Commission will docket the Application and establish procedures for notice, investigation, and hearing. The Commission will suspend the proposed revised rates and charges through October 12, 1998, while the reasonableness of those rates and charges are investigated.¹

Accordingly, IT IS ORDERED THAT:

(1) This Application be docketed; be assigned Case No. PUE980287; and that all associated papers be filed therein.

(2) As provided by § 56-238 of the Code of Virginia, Columbia's proposed revised rates for service set out in its Rate Schedules and proposed revised Special Service Charges be suspended for a period of 150 days, or to and through October 12, 1998.

(3) As provided by § 12.1-31 of the Code of Virginia and Rule 7:1 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure ("the Rules"), 5 VAC 5-10-520, a Hearing Examiner be assigned to

¹ The Company also filed a Fourth Revised Volume No. 1 of its tariff to supersede the Third Revised Volume No. 1 now in effect to reflect the name change from Commonwealth Gas Services, Inc. to Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. (Prepared Direct Testimony of R. E. Horner on Behalf of Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. at 2.) The Commission will suspend only the proposed revised rates in the Rate Schedules and the proposed Special Service Charges. All proposed tariff revisions intended to reflect the name change may take effect at the end of the 30-day notice period, as provided by § 56-237 of the Code of Virginia.

conduct further proceedings on behalf of the Commission and to file a final report with a transcript of this proceeding.

(4) A public hearing be held on this Application beginning at 10:00 a.m. on January 12, 1999, in the Commission's Courtroom, Second Floor, Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia.

(5) On or before July 29, 1998, all notices of protest, as required by Rule 5:16(a) of the Rules, 5 VAC 5-10-420(a), shall be filed with the Clerk of the Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2118, and a copy simultaneously served on counsel to Columbia, Kodwo Ghartey-Tagoe, Esquire, Mays & Valentine, L.L.P., P.O. Box 1122, Richmond, Virginia 23218-1122.

(6) Within five days of receipt of a notice of protest, Columbia shall serve upon the filer a copy of this Order, its Application, supporting testimony and exhibits, unless copies of the material have already been provided to that person.

(7) On or before November 23, 1998, each protestant shall file with the Clerk an original and fifteen (15) copies of its protest, as required by Rule 5:16(b), 5 VAC 5-10-420(b), and an original and fifteen (15) copies of the testimony and exhibits that it intends to offer in support of its protest, and shall serve one (1) copy of the protest, testimony, and exhibits on counsel to Columbia and on all other parties.

(8) The Commission Staff shall investigate the Application and, on or before December 4, 1998, shall file with the Clerk an original and fifteen (15) copies of the testimony and exhibits that it intends to offer and shall serve one (1) copy on all parties.

(9) On or before December 18, 1998, Columbia may file with the Clerk an original and fifteen (15) copies of any rebuttal testimony and exhibits that it intends to offer in response to testimony and exhibits previously filed and shall serve one (1) copy on all parties.

(10) Rule 6:4, Interrogatories to Parties or Requests for Production of Documents and Things, 5 VAC 5-10-480, shall be modified for this proceeding as follows. Answers and objections shall be served within twelve (12) days after receipt of interrogatories. Special motions upon the validity of any objections raised by answers shall be filed within three (3) working days of receipt of the objection.

(11) Columbia shall promptly make available for public inspection at its business offices during regular hours copies of this Order, its Application, and supporting testimony and exhibits.

(12) Columbia shall publish the following notice as display advertising (not classified) once a week for two consecutive

weeks in newspapers of general circulation in its service territory, publication to be completed by July 8, 1998:

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC OF AN APPLICATION
FOR A GENERAL INCREASE IN RATES BY
COLUMBIA GAS OF VIRGINIA, INC.
CASE NO. PUE980287

On May 15, 1998, Columbia Gas of Virginia, Inc. ("Columbia" or "Company") filed an application with the State Corporation Commission ("the Commission") for a general increase in rates and to revise its tariff. In its application, the tariff revisions proposed are designed to develop additional annual jurisdictional operating revenues over the Company's latest Commission-approved rates in Case No. PUE950033 of \$13,801,444, an increase of 7.4%, and over currently effective interim rates of \$5,262,273, representing an increase of 2.7%. While the total revenue requirement that may be approved is limited to the amount of additional revenue produced by the Company's proposed rates, PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that individual rates and charges approved by the Commission may be either higher than or lower than those proposed by the Company.

The Commission has suspended the Company's proposed rates, and has scheduled a public hearing on January 12, 1999, before a Hearing Examiner in the Commission's second floor courtroom, located in the Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia, to hear evidence relevant to the Company's application. A copy of Columbia's application is available for public inspection during regular business hours at all Columbia offices where customer bills may be paid, and from 8:15 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the State Corporation Commission, Document Control Center, First Floor, Tyler Building, 1300 East Main Street, Richmond, Virginia.

Any person desiring to comment in writing on Columbia's application may do so by directing such comments on or before November 23, 1998, to the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218. Those written comments must refer to Case No. PUE980287. Any person desiring to make a statement at the public hearing concerning Columbia's application need only appear in the Commission's second floor courtroom at 9:45 a.m. on the day of the hearing and identify himself or herself as a public witness to the Commission's Bailiff.

On or before July 29, 1998, persons desiring to participate as Protestants, as defined in Rule 4:6 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure ("Rule" or "Rules"), and to present evidence and cross-examine witnesses shall file an original and fifteen (15) copies of a Notice of Protest, as provided in Rule 5:16(a) with the Clerk of the Commission at the address set forth below and shall serve a copy of the same upon Columbia and all other parties of record. Service upon the Company shall be directed to its counsel, Kodwo Gharthey-Tageo, Esquire, Mays & Valentine, L.L.P., P.O. Box 1122, Richmond, Virginia 23219.

Any person who expects to submit evidence, cross-examine witnesses, or otherwise participate in the proceeding as a Protestant pursuant to Rule 4:6, shall file on or before November 23, 1998, an original and fifteen (15) copies of a Protest conforming to Rule 5:16(b) with the Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218, referring to Case No. PUE980287, and shall simultaneously send a copy thereof to Columbia's counsel at the address set out herein, and to any other Protestant. The Protestant shall set forth (i) a precise statement of interest of the

Protestant in the proceeding; (ii) a full and clear statement of the facts which the Protestant is prepared to prove by competent evidence; (iii) a statement of specific relief sought and the legal basis therefor. Any corporate entity or other entity described in Rule 4:8 that wishes to submit evidence, cross-examine witnesses or otherwise participate as a Protestant must be represented by legal counsel in accordance with the requirements of Rule 4:8 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure.

On or before November 23, 1998, each Protestant shall file with the Clerk of the Commission an original and fifteen (15) copies of the prepared testimony and exhibits the Protestant intends to present at the January 12, 1999 public hearing and shall simultaneously mail a copy of same to Columbia's counsel at the address set out herein and to other Protestants.

Protestants should review the Commission's Order for Notice and Hearing for instructions regarding discovery and interrogatories.

All written communications to the Commission concerning the Company's application should be directed to William J. Bridge, Clerk of the State Corporation Commission, c/o Document Control Center, P.O. Box 2118, Richmond, Virginia 23218, and should refer to Case No. PUE980287.

Individuals with disabilities who require an accommodation to participate in the hearing may contact the Commission at 1-800-552-7945 (voice) or 1-804-371-9026 (TDD). Individuals requesting accommodations should contact the Commission at either of these numbers at least seven (7) days before the scheduled hearing date.

COLUMBIA GAS OF VIRGINIA, INC.

(13) On or before June 30, 1998, Columbia shall serve a copy of this Order on each local government official to whom it provided a copy of its Application; service shall be made by delivery of a copy to the usual place of business or by depositing a copy in the United States mail, properly addressed and stamped.

(14) On or before August 28, 1998, Columbia shall file proof of newspaper publication and a certificate of service of copies of the order, including the names and addresses for officials served.